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AUTHOR Ediger, Marlow
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ABSTRACT

The five chapters of this paper focus on ways parents can help their preschool and elementary school-age children acquire basic skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and other curriculum areas. The first chapter describes eight misconceptions that lay writers have about learning in school settings. The second chapter outlines methods parents can use to help preschool and kindergarten children achieve in reading. Cooperation between parents and teachers is emphasized. Chapter Three offers (1) writing experiences for preschool and early primary grade pupils, (2) writing experiences for late primary grade pupils, and (3) writing activities for intermediate and upper grade pupils. The fourth chapter suggests learning activities for primary and upper grade students. Ways parents can help their children achieve in curriculum areas such as social studies, science and health are briefly suggested in the fifth chapter. (Author/RH)

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HELPING YOUR CHILD ACHIEVE IN SCHOOL

Marlow Ediger, Ph.D.
Professor of Education
Northeast Missouri State University

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CHAPTER ONE

FALLACIES ABOUT PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOL

When reading articles in selected daily newspaper and weekly newsmagazines, there are numerous erroneous ideas on schools and education expressed in these writings. First of all, many of these writers feel it is entirely up to the classroom teacher to teach pupils to read, write, and compute. No one else then is significant in teaching pupils. It must be emphasized, however, that most pupils do spend much time with the parents, or the guardian, as well as other individuals. Thus, the home setting is very important in helping pupils to learn that which is vital. The home can provide a very rich learning environment for pupils. For example, there can be many interesting books and magazines for pupils to read in the home setting. Or, if the preschooler or a kindergarten pupil cannot read to themselves, parents may look at pictures in these books with the child and also read orally related ideas that go along with these illustrations. The home setting then is very vital in helping pupils to learn. There are other environments, other than the home and school, that also affect how much a pupil has learned.

Secondly, writers in selected newspapers and weekly newsmagazines feel that skills and facts have been taught in school

rather than aiding pupils to learn to read, write, and compute. If reading, writing, and arithmetic only, were taught throughout the school day, life for these pupils would indeed become boring. This would be true even if stimulating methods were utilized in teaching the 3 R's. Anyway, there is more to life than learning to read, write, and compute. Shouldn't pupils also learn content in science, social studies, health, music, art, and physical education? Sometimes, writers in daily newspapers and weekly newsmagazines emphasize that teachers have taught "dog washing," "fly casting," and "turtle raising" instead of the 3 R's. I have never visited an elementary school where the above named substitutions were made or were even considered for teaching purposes. On the elementary level of schooling is generally where pupils learn to read, write, and compute, as well as acquire other learnings.

Thirdly, many lay writers in education feel that teachers should teach the 3 R's only (or largely) to pupils in school. It almost sounds as if the ability to read, write, and compute is all that is necessary to develop a well educated person. Or, the feeling may exist that a pupil needs to achieve well in the 3 R's only, to function well in American society. Certainly, that is a very narrow point of view in terms of what pupils should learn in order to do well in the future. Learning to read, write, and compute will provide foundational learnings for pupils so that more complex ideas, skills, and attitudes may be developed. I believe that most individuals in the United States

would say that situations in life are becoming increasingly complex. In other words, it becomes more difficult to have the knowledge one needs to make good decisions. There is no end to ideas needed in life in order to be a proficient decision-maker. Let's not have a 3 R's curriculum in school only. Much time and effort should go into determining what pupils need to learn in addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Fourthly, selected lay writers in education feel there is perfect agreement as to what should be taught in each of the 3 R's. For example, in teaching reading, it may be felt that pupils generally should learn to read by learning to sound out each letter (phonetic analysis) in printed words from basal readers. This can be a beneficial way to learn to read on the part of many pupils. What about the pupil who cannot hear sounds which relate to different letters within each word being read? These pupils may then not learn to read at all with the use of phonetic analysis methods (sounding out letters in order to identify an unknown word). There are many other ways for pupils to learn to read in addition to relating sounds to letters within words. Individual pupils differ from each other in many ways, including reading ability. Some learn to read much earlier and read more proficiently. They also differ from each other in beneficial methods utilized in learning to read. More will be said later about approaches which may be used to help pupils learn to read well.

Fifthly, lay writers in the field of education believe, in many cases, that all pupils should read up to the level of capability of their present grade level as a minimum. It is difficult to state with authority which level of reading achievement, for example, can be called the eighth grade level. Usually, standardized tests published by leading companies are utilized to measure which grade level a pupil is reading on. Thus, for example, a sixth grade pupil having taken a standardized test measuring achievement in reading may reveal a fifth grade level of reading. Is this good or bad? This would depend upon the individual pupil. Selected pupils have more capabilities in reading than do other learners. The sixth grade pupil reading on a fifth grade level may be achieving as well as possible. This learner may be very responsible and is doing the best possible to become a good reader. It could also be that this same pupil has considerable capabilities but doesn't put forth much effort to become a better reader. Generally, a sixth grade pupil with average intelligence should read on the sixth grade level of reading achievement. There are factors in a pupil's environment that may lower standardized test score results in reading achievement. Among others, these factors include anxiety in taking tests, not feeling well physically, being upset emotionally, problems in the family, not getting along with others, and poor teaching in the school/class setting. Each pupil is a complex individual. A good teacher assists each pupil to achieve as

well in reading as possible. This does not mean that a child can be forced to read better than what his/her capabilities call for. There, of course, is a limit to what any one of us can accomplish and achieve in life. There is no exception to this statement in the area of reading instruction. Thus, not all pupils by any means can achieve up to their present grade levels in reading accomplishment.

Sixthly, teachers can do an excellent job of teaching if they are capable and desire to do so. Many teachers face complex problems in teaching reading due to having thirty or more pupils, for example, in the classroom setting. As the number of pupils increases in a classroom, the more difficult it becomes to help each pupil do well in reading. If discipline problems also are present in the classroom, it becomes even more complex to assist learners individually to achieve well in reading, as well as in other curriculum areas. Situations, such as these, of course, do not excuse poor teaching. The lay public and boards of education must be held accountable to keep the number of pupils in a classroom at a manageable level where each teacher may do as well as possible in teaching the 3 R's and other curriculum areas.

Teachers, supervisors, and principals in a school, in many situations, are not prepared to work with pupils who are severe discipline problems. Sometimes, it is very time consuming for

a teacher to work with two or three disrupters and yet at the same time attempt to teach the rest of the pupils in the classroom. Problems, such as these, need resolving with the help of school personnel, the board of education, and the lay public.

Seventhly, little mention is made in the school district having a vital responsibility in upgrading the teaching skills of teachers. Selected teachers do need inservice education opportunities furnished by the local school district to increase skills in the teaching of the 3 R's, science, social studies, and health units. Specially prepared teachers may need assistance to increase skills in teaching art, music, and physical education. Selected teachers may be teaching as they were taught in the school-class setting. These methods may indeed have been outdated and harsh. With the utilization of negative approaches in teaching, pupils may well learn to dislike to read, write, compute, as well as achieve adequately in science, social studies, and health units of study. Pupils must develop a desire to learn and continuously wish to achieve as well as possible.

Eighthly, selected lay writers in the field of education emphasize that teachers are extremely lax in discipline. To be sure, particular schools and classrooms in the United States have succumbed to extreme vandalism and violence. Educators in the school setting are not equipped to work with many violent pupils. Otherwise, the question continually arises as to how

strict or permissive a teacher should be in teaching pupils. Under which conditions (as far as the classroom environment is concerned) do pupils learn best? Can teacher, principals, and supervisors be too rigid in working with pupils? What does a harsh learning environment do to pupils? What does a permissive classroom do to aid pupils in learning? With too few guidelines for pupils to abide by in the classroom, how do situations such as these affect pupils? More will be written about the topic "discipline and the pupil" in a later chapter.

IN SUMMARY

There are selected fallacies involved in lay writers appraising the school curriculum in the United States. Parents of preschool as well as school age pupils in particular have, of course, a very vital interest in teaching-learning situations in the school-class settings. These parents can do much to assist teachers to become accountable in the school-class setting. The entire content of this book "Helping Your Child Achieve in School" is devoted to the role of parents and guardians in educating their young.

CHAPTER TWO

HELPING YOUR CHILD IN READING

There are university professors as well as supervisors, principals, and teachers who feel and believe that only classroom teachers should teach reading to pupils. Reasons given to support this point of view include the following:

1. Teachers have been trained and certified to teach pupils. Parents and other lay people are not licensed and certified in teaching reading.

2. Parents and guardians make too many errors and use outdated methods in teaching reading.

3. Proper materials are lacking in the home setting to assist in the teaching of reading.

4. Parents become emotional and may reprimand pupils who do not read up to expectations of the former within the home arena.

There is much, of course, that parents and guardians may do to help their children achieve well in the area of reading.

THE PUPIL, PARENTS, AND READING

What can parents do to guide pupils to achieve well in reading? Let's notice selected methods which may be utilized to help preschoolers and kindergarten pupils.

As soon as these youngsters have adequate interest, the parent or parents may look at pictures in library books with the involved children. Related ideas in these library books may also be read to preschool and kindergarten pupils. If the young child has questions and comments to offer pertaining to the illustrations and/or ideas read, this should be encouraged. Interest and curiosity on the part of pupils toward library books should be encouraged. At a young age, pupils must learn to feel that reading is an enjoyable and beneficial activity. Too frequently, pupils and adults find reading difficult and not profitable. Pupils who enjoy reading as an activity will read. This should be true if pupils are slow learners, average achievers, or talented readers. Library books are written on different achievement levels. Thus, reading materials exist which can be beneficial to individuals no matter what their present level of achievement is. Library books developed for preschool and kindergarten pupils should contain many large, appealing illustrations. Pupils, of course, learn much from pictures contained in library books and other reading materials. Once pupils understand important ideas in picture form, the act of reading then becomes less complex. If pupils struggle over ideas being read as well as identifying new words, the act of reading may be overwhelming for many pupils. However, if pupils understand background or basic ideas pertaining to what will be read, it becomes easier to recognize and pronounce new words in print. The preschool and kindergarten level is a good time for

young children to obtain background ideas pertaining to what they will be reading at a later time. Parents and guardians in the home setting are in an excellent position to help their children acquire ideas, and content in general.

Kindergarten pupils may reveal much curiosity when they point to new words and want parents to give their pronunciations. This is a healthy sign that pupils are interested in books and are beginning to show an interest in the act of reading. Parents, however, should definitely not force these youngsters in learning to read. Forcing pupils to learn to read when they are not ready to develop this skill can make for feelings of dislike toward reading. Thus, negative attitudes may be developed toward reading as the first of the 3 R's. Learners above the kindergarten level should also have new words pronounced to them by parents as the need arises in ongoing reading activities.

It is sometimes felt that much money is needed to have reading materials available for pupils in the home setting. This certainly need not be the case. Children can bring selected library books from the school library to the home setting free. If pupils do not avail themselves of these opportunities, the parent should talk to the involved teacher pertaining to possible reading materials that can be checked out free for use in the home. The library books checked out from the school library should be interesting, challenging, and stimulating to pupils. Pupils who select their own library books from school generally choose those which are

understandable and have appeal. This is the way it should be. If a child selects library books on one topic only, such as farm animals, parents may read in an interesting manner and discuss the related contents to these pupils of library books containing a variety of topics. Other possibilities for checking out library books free include the local city's public or private library. Librarians in public and private libraries can be very helpful in choosing suitable library books for pupils. In society, many parents have adequate income to buy enrichment library books, magazines, and weekly newspapers, written especially for children. It is excellent for pupils to own their very own books and other reading materials. The child's teacher and/or school librarian may be consulted on needed reading materials for pupils.

Parents and guardians in the home setting must take ample time to read to themselves. Thus, pupils can notice models in that parents love and enjoy reading. Pupils may not become proficient readers unless they can see parents read to themselves. The content parents read should also reveal a model to pupils. Reading of comic strips largely or only by parents, of course, is not adequate. Parents should read and be informed pertaining to local, state, national, and international news happenings. It is only wise to be a knowledgeable individual pertaining to what is relevant and significant. Certainly, news happenings do affect us directly as well as indirectly. Pupils may then notice that parents do read and read vital content. Parents always serve as

models to their children. Hardly, for example, can children be expected to refrain from the use of alcohol if parents are consumers. The child could, on his own, develop a value system which prohibits the use of alcohol even though a parent (or both parents) are either light or heavy consumers. This is not too likely, however. Again, it can not be emphasized strongly enough that if pupils are to enjoy reading experiences, parents also must show a positive attitude toward this valuable skill.

Parents must also take adequate time to listen to the child read orally in the home setting. There are many pupils who like to read orally and thus reveal to parents how well they are reading. Situations such as these give parents opportunities to notice pupil achievement in reading. Help can be given to pupils who cannot identify specific words. The content of the completed oral reading activity may be discussed involving parents and the child. One word of caution to parents--do not show negative feelings toward the pupil's present reading level. Rather, praise the child when he/she is improving in reading skills. Scolding and reprimanding pupils in their present achievement level can only make for situations where the young reader learns to dislike reading. Encourage the child to read by having interesting, quality reading materials in the home. You, the parents, as was stated previously, must set a good model for children by also reading to yourselves.

There are many reading games which may be played with children. Elementary age pupils generally like to play games. Thus, for example, four, five, and six year olds may like to locate items in the home which start with the same beginning sound as in the word "baby." These children with parental involvement may find a "bat," "bird" (in a cage), "ball," and "bottle" in one or several rooms. Each of these objects with their names starts with the same beginning sound. Four, five, and six year olds enjoy listening to poems containing rhyming words. They also like to give words which rhyme with a word presented by the parent. For example, if a parent asks for words which rhyme with "bat," young learners can respond with "cat," "hat," "mat," and others. Games should provide enjoyable experiences for pupils. Intermediate and upper grade pupils like to work crossword puzzles. These crossword puzzles may guide pupils in vocabulary development as well as in learning to read selected new words. Parents and the involved pupils cooperatively can work to complete crossword puzzles. There are weekly newspapers and magazines written for pupils on a graded basis which contain crossword puzzles. Parents should ask the pupil's teacher about the names and addresses of these newspapers and magazines written for pupils on different grade levels.

Parents, of course, should take much interest in their child's achievement in school, kindergarten through grade twelve. If a

pupil is not doing well in the curriculum area of reading, parents should have a conference with the teacher. It is important for the teacher and the parent to respect each other in the conference setting. The parent or parents in the conference may well be the necessary ingredient in working toward an improved reading curriculum for the pupil. If a child is not doing well in reading, the following reasons may be in evidence:

1. The readers used the classroom are either too easy for the child and boredom in reading is an end result, or the reader is too complex and learners cannot be successful on that level of achievement. Fourth grade readers utilized on the fourth grade level may meet the needs of very few pupils in a classroom. For selected pupils the content of the reader will be too easy; for others the reader has content which is excessively complex. The parent's role and responsibility is to confer with the teacher in choosing reading materials which are beneficial for a particular child. Too frequently, in a classroom, all pupils are studying the same story at the same time from a basal reader. This is not right and certainly does not harmonize with the diverse reading levels of a given set of pupils in the classroom setting.

2. The plan of reading instruction used in teaching pupils does not harmonize with the child's abilities. Parents need to have much knowledge pertaining to each plan of reading instruction. Parents may say they are not professional educators and need not have information pertaining to different methods of teaching reading. However, if parents do not discuss diverse plans of reading

instruction with the teacher of their children, improvement in the child's ability to read may not occur. Which are selected methods of teaching which may benefit specific pupils?

(a) individualized reading. In this plan of reading instruction, the pupils select a library book to read. If the child is not able to select a book to read, the teacher should assist the pupil in this endeavor. Generally, the pupil will select a library book which he/she can benefit from. After the child has completed reading the chosen book, a conference is held with the teacher to notice how well the contents have been comprehended. The child can also read a selection in the library book orally to the teacher. The teacher can then notice comprehension and ability to recognize and pronounce words correctly on the part of each pupil. Individualized reading, as the name indicates, is a method of teaching reading to help each pupil achieve as well as possible. This plan of reading instruction may be utilized in place of or to supplement basal readers. Individualized reading definitely does not emphasize pupils goofing off in learning. It is not a watered down method of teaching reading. In a good program of individualized reading, each pupil is reading from a different library book than others in the classroom. Ideally, each one is doing as much reading as possible and reading from books which are understandable and interesting.

(b) programmed reading. Programmed instruction is a unique method of learning to read. Pupils progress in very small

steps in this method of teaching reading. Thus, for example, a pupil reads a sentence or two and views a related picture. The pupil then answers a question over what has been read. The question usually requires a very short answer. The pupil may then check his/her answer immediately with that given by the writer of the program. If the child was right with his/her answer, feelings of being rewarded are generally felt. The pupil is ready for the next item following the same small steps in learning--read, view a picture, give a short answer to a question, and then check the answer given. If a pupil gives an incorrect answer, he/she now knows the correct answer after checking and is also ready for the next item in learning.

(c) the experience chart. Experience charts generally are utilized in teaching kindergarten and first grade pupils prior to being able to read on their own. In developing an experience chart, pupils first must have an interesting experience, such as experiencing a field trip, film, filmstrip, slides, and/or a discussion. Next, pupils orally present content over what has been experienced. The teacher writes these ideas in neat, manuscript letters on the chalkboard as they are given by learners. Pupils may then read the content as the teacher points to each word. The words become increasingly familiar to pupils since they had realistic, related experiences prior to reading the content. Once pupils can do their own writing, they may write their own experience charts.

(d) other plans in the teaching of reading. Space does not permit to describe other plans of reading instruction to help each pupil learn to read as well as possible. These plans, if the parent is interested, may be discussed with the teacher--Individually Prescribed Instruction, Individually Guided Education, the Initial Teaching Alphabet (for primary grade pupils), the Diacritical Marking System, SRA Reading Laboratory, and color coding in reading instruction.

If a child is not progressing satisfactorily in reading, according to the thinking of parents, a conference should be held with the regular teacher and/or the remedial reading teacher.

3. Poor teaching is in evidence in the reading curriculum. The teacher is trying to cover too many pages in a basal reader in different class sessions rather than teaching individual pupils in learning to read. There is a big difference between the teacher keeping all pupils in a classroom together on the same page at the same time in utilizing a basal reader as compared to actually teaching each child the skills of reading.

4. Too much or too little phonetic analysis is emphasized in reading. The concept "phonetic analysis" is easy to understand. It merely has to do with a pupil learning to sound out individual letters or vital parts within a word. Teachers may call this process--associating sounds with symbols or letters. For example, in the word "can," each letter makes a different sound. The word "one" is a commonly used word and contains irregularities when

relating individual sounds to single letters. There are many words that contain inconsistencies when sounding out individual letters. Sometimes two or more letters make a sound--chair, there, and phone. There are silent letters within a word--knife, knee, bake, and hollow. There are many ways to write a long "i" sound--my, pie, sigh, kite, and right. It is quite obvious, from these examples, that a teacher can emphasize too much instruction in phonetic analysis. Many words are not that consistent between letters and their related sounds to emphasize phonetic analysis as a sole method of identifying words. However, there are also many, many cases where instruction in phonetic analysis is beneficial. Even the word "one" has an "n" sound, such as in can, man, fan, ban, Dan, Nan, Jan, pan, ran, tan, and van. Thus, the teacher needs to help pupils learn to relate sounds to symbols or letters in reading. A pupil who is not progressing well in reading may need help in sounding out letters within a word. It must be remembered that we read whole words and do not distort sounds within a word, such as distorting the pronunciation of the word "pail" into "puh" "ā" "ul." Pupils can become slow readers of content if too much attention is paid to specific sounds that individual letters make within a word. If a pupil cannot hear sounds within a word in order to be able to identify that unknown word, other methods need to be taught and utilized for word recognition purposes.

5. Too much or too little attention is given in identifying syllables within a word to assist in identifying new words. If

a pupil cannot hear syllables in words, other methods of teaching reading will need to be utilized. Most pupils, however, do find it helpful to be able to identify new words by recognizing inherent syllables. A pupil, for example, may feel the following to be a new unknown word: unimportant. However, he/she recognizes an important part of that word which is "important." The pupil has experienced the prefix "un" in other words, such as unknown and undo. Thus, "unimportant" in reality is basically not a new word to the reader, but is made up of syllables from two previously learned words. Other examples in which dividing a word into syllables can assist a pupil in identifying an otherwise unknown word:

- (a) transport -- trans/port
- (b) walking -- walk/ing
- (c) regardless -- re/gard/less
- (d) pencil -- pen/cil

A pupil then can become a more proficient reader when being able to divide words into syllables. This skill is necessary only to the degree that it helps individual pupils become better readers. There are teachers who day after day have pupils work workbook and/or mimeographic sheets containing work in dividing words into syllables (and/or emphasize work in phonetic analysis also) long after pupils have become skillful in the area of reading. Learning activities in syllabication and phonetic analysis should assist pupils to enjoy and like reading. Pupils' interest

in reading should not be hindered with experiences and activities emphasizing syllabication and phonetic analysis.

6. Too much or too little emphasis is being placed upon the use of context clues in identifying unknown words. The use of context clues in reading merely means that if a pupil does not know a word in reading, he/she will choose a word that makes sense in the sentence. For example, supposing a child is reading the following and does not identify the last word: I see a _____. There are many words that would fit in meaningfully with the first three words in the sentence. Thus, a child may respond with "car," "girl," "boy," "clown," and "man." The pupil could also read in context erroneously the following words: oar, angel, owl, oriole, ark, and egg. However, these words do not fit into the context of the rest of the sentence properly. Sometimes a pupil will read erroneously a ridiculous word into a sentence: He ran over the where. The underlined word "where" definitely does not make sense in the sentence. The teacher must help pupils choose words that make sense within the sentence. Identifying unknown words in context, of course, can be overdone. A pupil, for example, may then guess new words, wrongly, which make sense in a sentence and yet are not the correct words. Consider again the following sentence in print: I see a b _____. There are many objects and items which one can see and what is named may well make sense within a sentence. If the pupil knows the individual sound that the letter "b" makes which starts the new word, a very vital

clue is then given as to the new unknown word. Thus, words such as "car," "girl," and "clown" are eliminated. These words do not start with the sound made by the letter "b". The words "baby," "bat," "ball," and "boat" start with the "b" sound. In readers written for primary grade pupils, there are ample pictures generally on each of the inherent pages. Thus, by looking at the picture of the page being read, the pupil may notice a picture of a boy. "Boy" is the correct word to be read in the sentence: I see a _____. Thus, pictures may also give clues as to the proper identification of unknown words.

7. Too little or too much emphasis is being placed upon the use of configuration clues in reading. Configuration clues merely pertain to pupils identifying words through noticing their shape or form. Thus, pupils can learn to notice how words differ from each other in terms of shape or form. Each of the following words, for example, have gross differences in configuration -- boy, girl, night, tall, and football. Notice how the initial consonant in the word "boy" differs from the first letter in the word "girl." The ending letters in the word "boy" and "girl" also differ much from each other in appearance. Some words are longer and others are shorter in length. Selected words have taller letters than do other words. Thus, it is vital for pupils to learn to identify words in terms of configuration in addition to phonetic analysis and syllabication. However, ultimately, good readers recognize words instantly by looking at words and being able to pronounce them readily.

You, the parent, have an important responsibility in improving the reading curriculum for your child. If a pupil is not learning to recognize new words at a reasonable level of achievement, consult the teacher to discuss methods utilized in helping pupils acquire proficiency in reading. Pupils need adequate learnings in phonetic analysis, syllabication, context clues, picture clues, and configuration clues to become good readers. There are pupils who may come in the category of having a learning disability (or disabilities). Learning disability (LD) specialists in school may need to be consulted, if with good teaching, a pupil does not achieve at a realistic level in reading. Among others, the following behaviors may be exhibited by pupils with LD characteristics:

1. reading words from a right to left direction or mixing words within a sentence (e.g. the word "was" read as "saw," the sentence "The cat saw the dog" read as "The dog saw the cat"). Rather consistently pupils read in the previously described manner and not on a single occasion only. Selected beginners may make reversals and outgrow these tendencies in a rich learning environment. Pupils definitely must not be scolded in reading achievement for that which cannot be learned at a given stage of development.

2. having a very short attention span. Reading materials must be on the interest and understanding level of pupils. Even then selected learners have fleeting attention spans. They cannot

concentrate long enough on individual words in order to learn to read. There are pupils who may need specific methods and materials in learning to read. A reputable LD teacher may be able to give specific help in these cases. The writer, in most cases, is opposed to medical prescriptions such as ritalin to assist "hyperactive" children develop a longer attention span. Too frequently, regular and learning disability (LD) teachers desire pupils to be extremely quiet and passive in the classroom. Pupils generally are active, healthy individuals and should be involved in learning activities and experiences which are beneficial in becoming better readers. Activities and experiences need to be chosen which increase and lengthen pupils' attention spans.

3. not remembering specific words in reading and spelling after ample exposure to these learnings. A pupil, for example, in a reputable program of reading instruction continually may not be able to remember specific words from diverse lessons in reading instruction. There are recommended methods to utilize in teaching pupils who cannot recall vital words in reading content.

Parents of children with learning disabilities in reading should consult a remedial reading teacher or LD specialist in the public school on ways to help pupils with unusual problems in learning to read. The following are selected recommendations for parents to follow with children having LD problems:

(a) Show interest in your child's reading. Do not expect a level of achievement which is not possible or not realistic for

the pupil. Discuss with pupils what has been read in an understandable manner. Parents who scold pupils for not doing as well as desired in reading aid the latter in learning to dislike the act of reading.

(b) Encourage and support your child in reading. LD children, in particular, need encouragement to keep trying and achieving in reading. They generally experience much frustration and unhappiness in reading. A person who perceives a word or words printed from right to left instead of left to right, of course, may not understand what is being read. The major purpose of reading content is to comprehend facts, concepts, and generalizations. Pupils with problems in the area of learning disabilities need praise when improvement in reading is in the offing.

IN SUMMARY

There are diverse plans of instruction to assist each pupil to develop as well as possible in reading. Teachers and parents need to work together to guide a learner to experience continuous progress in reading. Parents and the teacher need to evaluate if the pupil is

1. benefitting optimally from the present program of reading instruction. If the child is not experiencing success in reading, causes need to be determined as to why this is happening. An improved program of reading instruction should follow the conference.

2. interested in reading. If a lack of interest is in evidence, reading materials can be found which generally are of

interest to an individual child.

3. perceiving purpose or reasons for learning to read.

Both the teacher and the parent need to guide, not dictate, pupils to see values in becoming a good reader.

CHAPTER THREE

WRITING AND THE CHILD

Writing, the second of the three R's in the school curriculum, is a very vital skill for pupils to develop. It is difficult for many pupils to become good writers. There are many specific skills involved in learning to write. Thus, in the area of writing, pupils need to become skillful in

- (a) having legible handwriting.
- (b) spelling words correctly.
- (c) punctuating sentences correctly.
- (d) using capital letters properly.
- (e) indenting the first word of a paragraph.
- (f) having sentences in proper order within a paragraph, as well as having paragraphs in good sequence.
- (g) presenting ideas and content clearly and accurately to the reader.

Thus, there are numerous skills that pupils need to develop to become good writers. What can parents do to aid their children in becoming better writers?

WRITING EXPERIENCES FOR THE PRESCHOOL AND EARLY PRIMARY GRADE PUPILS

Preschool pupils (approximately four years of age) and kindergarten pupils, of course, in most cases cannot do their own writing of words, sentences, and paragraphs. Thus, the parents will

have to write ideas presented by these young learners. There are selected first grade pupils who can write ideas on paper. The following are recommended experiences for young children in the area of writing:

1. When a parent is writing a friendly letter to a relative or friend, the preschool or early primary grade pupil could be asked for ideas to be included in the written product. The child could even be asked to give exact ideas that the parent could write directly into the letter, as the young learner's contribution. The child may then see talk written down. It is suggested that neat manuscript writing (printed letters and words) be utilized in the friendly letter to record the child's ideas. Manuscript writing is closely related to the appearance of letters and words contained in textbooks and library books for pupils. Cursive writing (commonly called writing in long hand) will be emphasized later when the child has better control of the use of his/her muscles in forming individual letters and words. Most children also begin writing experiences by using manuscript letters before cursive letters since the former are less strenuous to complete.

2. Young children, in many situations, have ideas which need recording. The parent may then use manuscript writing (print) to record content as given by these young learners. The parent should read the printed material back to the child to be certain content

has been recorded as desired by the child. The child with parental help may then read the written content. The parent may point to each word as it is being read. The child should be encouraged, not forced, to engage in diverse kinds of writing experiences. Children may learn to dislike writing if undesirable pressure is applied in learning to write. By working with and being interested in the child, the parent may well get young children interested in the fascinating area of writing.

3. The parent should read interesting library books to young children. These books must be written for young and not older children. Enthusiastic reading by parents is important in order to obtain the attention of young learners. Activities, such as these, may well increase pupil's interest in words and sentences. Becoming interested in words and sentences can increase pupil interest in writing. Young children must be able to read words before these words can be written. Pupils may wish to present ideas for the parent to record, pertaining to the library book being read. The young child again may see talk written down. The child with parent help may read the written content. These are writing experiences for young children. Once pupils at an older age level can write their own ideas, they, of course, should be encouraged to do so.

4. Beginning with the first grade level, selected young pupils are continuously developing proficiency in doing their own

writing. What kind of writing activities in the home setting can these pupils engage in?

(a) These young learners can be encouraged to write all or part of a friendly letter to relatives and friends. The parents may have additional content to write in these letters.

(b) A pupil may wish to order selected inexpensive items from a catalog. With parental help, the child may be assisted to fill in order forms properly from the involved catalog.

(c) A business letter may be written to get answers to a question or to order a free or inexpensive item. Letters of inquiry to have questions answered may be written to a conservation agent, a county farm agent, a boy or a girl scout organization, and/or the mayor and council of a specific city. To order free and inexpensive materials, for example, the parent may help first grade pupils to understand and write the different parts of a business letter.

5. Parents should show and discuss with young children business and friendly letters received in the mail. Thus, kindergarten and first grade pupils may notice the different parts that make up a friendly letter and a business letter. Parents may read the letter or letters to these young learners. This activity should not be forced upon pupils. But rather, children should be encouraged to pursue increased interest in letter writing. Generally, learnings forced upon pupils make for negative feelings toward

letter writing and other forms of written work. Selected nursery school, kindergarten, and first grade pupils may be interested in looking at

- (a) announcements of meeting to be held in school, such as open house and parent teacher organization meetings.
- (b) colorful advertisements in newspapers and in magazines.
- (c) printed commercials on quality television programs.
- (d) printed programs pertaining to plays attended, e.g. the diverse scenes and acts, characters in the play, and sponsors of the play.

The parent must remember that young children may obtain beginning or rudimentary learnings only, pertaining to written content in announcements, advertisements, printed commercials, and programs. The purpose in these activities would be to obtain pupil interests in noticing that printed materials convey ideas and information. Thus, reading and writing can be fascinating, challenging ways to communicate ideas to others. Reading and writing experiences should become enjoyable activities for pupils.

WRITING EXPERIENCES FOR LATE PRIMARY GRADE PUPILS

Pupils, in grades two and three, differ much from each other in writing achievement. There are selected second and third grade pupils who are good writers for their age level. Others may be achieving at a level in writing commensurate with many kindergarten and first grade pupils. Parents should not criticize the present level of achievement in writing for any one pupil. Each child must

be respected and assisted to achieve as much as possible in the area of writing. How can parents help these second and third grade pupils in writing in the home setting?

1. These pupils may write partial or entire letters to friends, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. Parents should not force, but encourage pupil participation in these kinds of writing activities.

2. Teachers in the school setting may require homework involving writing activities. Thus, if a child is required to write a book report, a suitable place for doing homework should be provided. The study area should be quiet, comfortable, and conducive for studying. Parents should praise pupils for working on and completing homework assignments. Once a child has completed homework activities, a reasonable reward, beyond praise, may be in the offering, as promised by parents. These rewards may include the child choosing what he/she would like to do within the framework of a favorable range of choices. Thus, buying games or library books, eating in a restaurant, going swimming, or an increased allowance may be given to pupils when adequate, reasonable effort is put forth in learning to write. The home setting must encourage pupils to achieve as much as possible. Writing is no exception!

3. During parent-teacher conferences in the school-class setting, specific help and guidance in each curriculum area should be pinpointed for pupils. With home and school cooperation, parents can do much to help pupils achieve well in the area of writing.

If a pupil does not use legible handwriting, as identified in a parent-teacher conference, help in the home setting may be given to assist learners in proper letter formation, spacing of letters and words, alignment of letters and words (staying on the line in writing), and slant of letters. Help given to a pupil in writing legibly should end in successful, not forced, achievement.

If spelling words correctly is a problem for pupils, the parent can help in the following areas:

(a) correctly spelling to the involved pupil a word or words as needed in writing activities.

(b) assisting pupils to proofread what has been written. Pinpoint incorrectly spelled words.

(c) helping learners associate sounds with letters as new words are being spelled.

(d) playing spelling games with pupils; these may be purchased or made in the home setting. The teacher of the pupil may be consulted pertaining to the addresses of commercial companies that sell spelling games. Teachers also should have much knowledge pertaining to the construction of games to be utilized in spelling. For example, the parent and the pupil may neatly cut out fish from different colors of construction paper. A relevant spelling word should be printed in accurate manuscript letters on each "fish." A stick with a piece of string and an attached magnet may represent the fishing pole. A metal paper clip should be attached to the mouth of each fish. If a pupil "catches" a fish and can spell

the involved word correctly, the learner may keep the fish in his/her collection. If a pupil incorrectly spells a word, the "fish" must be thrown back in the "water". The child should be encouraged to catch as many fish as possible.

4. Creative writing activities can be fascinating for pupils. Thus, the pupil could be encouraged to write verse pertaining to content in a library book which has been read. The parent may also write a poem and read it to the pupil. It can be a good model for pupils to hear parents read their own composed verse. The following kinds of verse may be written by pupils or by parents who share ideas written with their children in the home setting:

1. couplets-- two lines of verse, somewhat uniform in length, in which ending words rhyme.

2. triplets-- three lines of verse, somewhat uniform in length. The ending words of each line rhyme.

3. quatrains-- four lines of verse. Lines one and two, as well as lines three and four may rhyme. There can be other patterns of rhyme, such as line one and three, as well as lines two and four rhyming.

4. limericks-- five lines are inherent in this type of verse. Limericks generally start with the words--"There once was". However, varied approaches may be utilized to initiate the writing of limericks. In a limerick, lines one, two, and five rhyme. Whereas, lines three and four also rhyme. Both the parent and the child generally enjoy writing limericks!

5. haiku verse-- contain three lines. Line one contains five syllables, whereas line two has seven syllables and line three five syllables.

Pupils should be encouraged to write the kinds of verse in which they can be successful learners. A lack of success generally makes for a poor self concept. If a pupil presently cannot write a specific kind of verse, at a later time this is always a possibility.

WRITING ACTIVITIES FOR INTERMEDIATE AND UPPER GRADE PUPILS

Parents need to remember that pupils do not become excellent writers at once with no previous growth and experience in good writing activities. Writing is a skill which requires continuous development. Thus, quality writing experiences for young learners, as previously discussed, are necessary in order that intermediate and upper grade pupils may experience continuous progress. To experience continuous progress and success in writing is very important for each pupil. Again, it should be stressed that a pupil will not all of a sudden become a good writer. Rather the pupil must practice diverse kinds of writing activities over a rather long period of time and be successful in these experiences. What we do not experience success in, we generally do not enjoy. Writing activities are no exception.

Many intermediate grade pupils can engage in and successfully complete different kinds of written work. There are selected learners who may be achieving on the primary grade level in writing.

Pressuring pupils to achieve at a higher level than their capabilities permit generally makes for feelings of resentment toward writing. A sympathetic, understanding parent, who offers assistance to children in the area of writing when this help is needed, may truly be an outstanding teacher! There are teachers in the school setting who attempt to force pupils to learn that which is not possible. Pupils then learn to dislike what the school has to offer.

Which learning activities in the area of writing may parents give guidance to their children?

1. writing poetry. (See previously given definitions for writing couplets, triplets, quatrains, limericks, and haiku poems.)
2. Writing tall tales, legends, mystery stories, adventure stories, biographies, and autobiographies. Library books can be checked out at the school library or the public library which pupils and parents may read to obtain models pertaining to the above listed kinds of writing activities. For example, content read on Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill may reveal the following standards to follow in pupils engaging in the writing of tall tales:

(a) A character or characters in the tall tale must have super human strength.

(b) These superhuman individuals get into situations involving mischief and complexity.

(c) Tall tales must include means of the individual getting out of the complex situations.

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There, of course, are also standards to follow in writing legends, mystery and adventure stories, biographies, and autobiographies. Fables and fairy tales may well provide additional purposes for pupils in writing. Reading books and stories pertaining to these diverse kinds of content can provide excellent models and standards for pupils' creative writing, e.g. Aesop's fables. The classroom teacher has suggestions for parents to utilize in guiding pupils to engage in diverse kinds of writing activities.

3. Writing business and friendly letters. Parents need to encourage their children to write business letters to order free and inexpensive materials. Pupils may also write friendly letters to friends, relatives, and neighbors. Business letters should contain the following parts:

- (a) Heading
Street address or route number of sender
City, State, zip code number
Today's date.
- (b) Inside Address
Name of person or company written to
Street address of this person or company
City, State, and zip code number
- (c) Greeting
e.g. Dear Sir or Dear Sirs:
 - (d) Body of the business letter containing the exact, precise content to communicate effectively with the addressee.
- (e) Closing
e.g. Sincerely, or Sincerely yours,
- (f) Signature of sender

Parents should guide pupils to understand why the different parts, as listed above, are needed in a business letter. For example, the inside address is needed in a business letter in order that the addressee knows the received letter has reached the proper destination. Individuals, of course, have placed the wrong business letter in an envelope. Pupils, of course, find it easy to see purpose in having an attached signature to a business letter. The company or individual receiving the letter needs to know who sent the letter. For each part of a business letter, pupils need to sense reasons for its inclusion.

The following may serve as a model for parent utilization in guiding their children to write friendly letters:

(a) Heading

Route Two
Kirksville, Missouri 63501
September __, 19__

(b) Greeting

Dear Kent,

(c) Body of friendly letter

I felt initially that my eight weeks working at the Boy Scout camp would be long and cumbersome. However, four short weeks have already elapsed. I still prepare the food and take care of the dishes each day. I find that each new sets of Scouts that come to camp are different as well as interesting. There is never a dull moment when completing my work in the kitchen. I will be home for a visit next weekend.

(d) Closing

Your brother,

(e) Signature

Bruce

As was true in writing friendly letters, the parent should assist the child to understand why the different parts of a friendly letter are needed. There is, of course, a purpose for including each part. Thus, the date of a friendly letter is necessary as a significant part since the reader will want to know approximately when the happenings written in the body took place. Letters have gotten lost in the mail for a period of a month, or even several years, before the actual destination is reached.

4. Writing invitations. Pupils celebrate their birthdays in the home setting by inviting selected friends. It is important to get pupils involved in the writing of invitations. Thus, pupils, obtain additional practice in writing. Each pupil should know and understand which content is necessary to write in an invitation. Thus, in writing invitations for peers to attend a birthday party, the five following questions need answering: who, what, why, where, and when. The following is presented as a model for the writing of invitations to attend a party.

You (who) are invited to attend a birthday party (what) in honor of John's eleventh birthday (why). The birthday party will be held at the Alfred Miller home, located at 218 East Lyon Street, across the street from the Upper Elementary School (where), on August 5, 19__ at 4:00 P.M. (when). The party will end at 6:00 P.M.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Miller

There are reasons for including answers to the five w's (who, what, why, where, and when) in a letter of invitation that is being or has been written. For example, the receiver of the invitation will want to know when the event is occurring. Otherwise, it is impossible to know when to arrive at a party. Pupils achieve at a higher level if they understand the reasons for writing specific ideas in a written product.

5. Writing riddles. Riddles fascinate many pupils. Parents may read or tell riddles to elementary age pupils. Intermediate grade, and in many cases primary grade pupils, may read riddles to themselves. Following these listening and reading activities pertaining to riddles, pupils may be stimulated to engage in the writing of riddles. Background information is necessary to write riddles. The following is presented as a model for a riddle.

I live in a forest or jungle.
I am a very strong animal.
I am larger than a cat whom I resemble in appearance.
I have stripes.
Who am I?

6. Other writing experiences. There are numerous other writing experiences for pupils to participate in with the encouragement of parents. These include:

(a) Writing plays. There usually is a story or more in a school basal reader which is written in terms of having play parts. The exact words to be read by a character in a play are presented in the readers. Stories from a reader may be rewritten in play parts.

(b) Writing jokes.

(c) Writing diary entries. These entries, of course, should be written on a day to day basis. The pupil needs to write that which is relevant for each day.

IN SUMMARY

If parents want their children to become increasingly proficient in the area of writing, a supportive environment must be in evidence in the home setting. The teacher can assist each pupil to become a better writer. However, the teacher, alone, cannot complete this task. Parents need to encourage, not force, their children to do a better job of writing. This may well mean to discuss writing with children and write with them. Parents, also, need to set an example for children in writing when the former engages in completing business and friendly letters, poems, notes of sympathy, and thank you letters, among others. Thus, parents reveal to children that writing is relevant and vital since they (the parents) write to communicate with others.

CHAPTER FOUR

MATHEMATICS AND THE PUPIL

Pupils need to become proficient in computing as well as be able to solve problems involving the use of numbers. Employers in the business world have complained that too many employees are not able to compute correctly in the solving of elementary problems in mathematics. Thus the teacher, as well as the parent, must:

1. Assist pupils to develop interest in mathematics.
2. Help learners to see reasons or purpose for gaining skill in the use of numbers.

3. Guide pupils to develop favorable attitudes in problem solving situations involving mathematics.

4. Assist each pupil to achieve as much as possible in the mathematics curriculum.

5. Help each learner to understand what has been learned. Memorization of subject matter is to be frowned upon unless pupils first understand or attach meaning to what is being learned.

6. Reward or praise a pupil for doing better or achieving at a higher level in mathematics as compared to previous times.

7. Assist pupils to determine specifically what was worked incorrectly in a mathematics problem before help is given to overcome these difficulties.

8. Challenge each pupil to use numbers in the solving of personal problems and of problems in society.

9. Not compare pupils unfavorably with others. Each child is different from others in school and in society.

Mathematics and the Primary Grade Pupil

There are many rich learning activities that young learners may experience in mathematics. Arithmetic is a part of the mathematics curriculum. Geometry and algebra are also facets of mathematics learnings for pupils. How can parents help their young children experience interesting learning activities in mathematics?

Learning Activities

Parents should definitely not force pupils to learn content in mathematics. Forcing pupils to learn may cause these learners to dislike what is being presented. Learning activities must be interesting as well as challenging to pupils. Thus, activities and experiences, such as the following may aid achievement in mathematics:

1. Sing counting songs with young children in order that they may learn the counting numbers. Songs such as "one little, two little, three little Indians, four little, five little, six little Indians, seven little, eight little, nine little Indians, ten little Indian boys," may assist pupils to say the counting numbers in proper order.

2. Have pupils plan in spending their allowance money. Discuss with pupils prices of items they wish to purchase such as how much money is needed to buy a package of gum, a candy bar, colored chalk, and colored pencils. Parents should assist their children to see that learnings gained in mathematics are useful. Pupils need to perceive that what is being learned in school can be used in society. Too frequently, pupils see little value or use in what is being taught and learned in the school-class setting.

3. Call pupils' attention to squares, circles, triangles, and rectangles in the design of buildings. Thus, pupils may notice a door in the shape of a rectangle. There may be tile on the floor arranged in terms of squares. Selected buildings have a window in the shape of a circle. Designs in candy bars and clothing may also reveal the world of geometry to the young learner.

4. Attempt to capture pupils' attention in the writing of checks and keeping checkbook balances. Rudimentary learnings may then be developed by these pupils pertaining to banking procedures and its practical application.

5. Have pupils notice prices on items at supermarkets, hardware stores, and clothing stores. Discuss those prices, in particular, which affect the young child, such as when a pair of shoes is being purchased for the involved learner.

6. Use games to stimulate interest in learning. For example, cut the design of a fish on different colors of construction paper. Cut the completed drawn fish out. Place a paper clip on

the mouth of each fish. Each fish may contain an addition fact, such as, $5+2=$, $6+3=$, and $4+4=$. These number pairs might harmonize with what a child is studying in school. A stick with an attached string and a magnet on the end can be used by the learner to catch a fish from the "pond." If the pupil correctly gives the answer to a number pair, such as $5+2=$, he or she may keep the caught fish. Otherwise, the fish must be thrown back into the pond. If a child responds incorrectly to what $5+2=$, he or she may need guidance in understanding what is wanted here. Thus, the pupil together with the parent may look at five bean, corn, or wheat seeds. These seeds must then be counted to notice a set of five members. Next two bean, corn, or wheat seeds may be counted. Ultimately, the five seeds and the two seeds may be joined together and seven seeds may then be counted. It is important for pupils to see, touch, and count a set of five, a set of two, and a set of seven. There are many other items which may be utilized to show members of sets such as pieces of candy, cookies, pencils, beads, chalk, crayons, potted plants, and sticks.

7. Show pupils computerized checks received by parents for work performed. Discuss with the pupil the amount of money earned and, in general, how the money will be spent. If the involved family has an itemized budget, this can be shown to and discussed with the learner.

8. Make mathematics a part of the experiences of a child each day in the home setting. Count items with children when feasible.

Add and subtract quantities, in everyday living, which capture pupil's interests. Multiply and divide simple quantities when learners are ready for these experiences. For example, if at a birthday party, each invited child is to receive two pieces of bubble gum, how many pieces are needed for five pupils? Practical experiences in the area of multiplication are then brought to the child's attention. In the area of division, primary grade pupils may meet up with a problem such as the following: There are fifteen marbles which must be divided among three pupils, how many marbles would each receive? Parents need to be certain that pupils understand what is involved in adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing. Simply memorizing answers to addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division combinations is not adequate.

Thus in the number pair $5+3=$, pupils need to experience a set of five objects and a set of three objects. The abstract numeral "5" must be associated by the child with the first set and the abstract numeral "3" associated with the second set. Ultimately, the two sets need to be joined together. Learners then must associate the abstract numeral "8" with the two sets of objects combined. Pupils also need to perceive where practical use may be made of a set of five and a set of three being combined to make a set of eight. For example, if a pupil has five marbles and receives three more marbles, how many marbles does the pupil now have?

9. Assist pupils with homework in the area of mathematics. Parents need to be patient and understanding in assisting pupils with homework assignments. Scolding and minimizing learners for not doing well in mathematics is certainly to be frowned upon. Parents can be firm, kind, and polite in helping young learners to achieve well in mathematics.

10. Consult with the classroom teacher if a child is not achieving satisfactorily in mathematics. Discuss with the teacher specific problems a pupil is experiencing in the area of mathematics. Parents should discuss these problems openly and in an atmosphere of respect with the teacher. The parent-teacher conference should result in a quality mathematics program for each child. Never should the results of a conference be used to criticize or punish the involved child by either the parent or teacher. The child should be assisted to develop wholesome attitudes toward mathematics and the general school curriculum.

11. Let young pupils experiment using pocket calculators. Many complex addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division problems may be solved accurately and very quickly with the use of a pocket calculator. These calculators may fascinate pupils in wanting to learn more about the world of mathematics.

Mathematics and the Upper Grade Pupil

The term "upper grade pupil" will refer to intermediate as well as junior high age students. What might parents do to assist these learners to achieve optimal development in mathematics?

1. Discuss with pupils what is meant by "inflation," "unemployment," "Gross National Product(GNP)," "Social Security," "income taxes (state and federal)," "state sales tax," "computers," and other mathematics concepts within the framework of radio and television newscasts as well as content read in reputable daily newspapers and newsmagazine accounts. Parents should learn with their children those concepts dealing with the world of mathematics.

2. Listen to pupils' problems pertaining to achieving well in the school mathematics curriculum. Parents, if at all possible, should avoid criticizing the teacher and the curriculum area by talking first to the involved teacher, and if necessary, to the school principal. The parent should assist pupils to overcome difficulties in mathematics learnings in the home setting. Positive attitudes toward mathematics need to be developed by pupils. Negative attitudes hinder pupils in learning that which is desirable and good.

3. Let pupils assist in determining how much a given set of items would cost in a supermarket, hardware store, and/or clothing store when shopping. With the use of a pocket calculator, pupils could determine unit cost of items being compared for selection purposes in shopping (e.g. the cost of an ounce of laundry soap when comparing three or four brands). In many situations unit prices are given for items in a supermarket; pupils, however, need to learn how to determine these costs using a pocket calculator. Being able to determine unit prices using paper and pencil, of course, is also important for involved learners.

4. Consult with the teacher if the mathematics curriculum is too complex or too easy for a given child. If the learner cannot be successful in the mathematics curriculum in school, reasons for this situation need to be diagnosed and remedied. If a pupil truly believes that mathematics is not adequately challenging, adjustments need to be made to provide the kind of learnings that would benefit this learner. Pupils do not achieve at the same level in mathematics in the classroom. Each pupil is different from other learners in capacity and achievement. Thus, the teacher must assist each individual to learn as much as possible in the area of mathematics. Forcing a child to learn that which is too complex is detrimental to the pupil. When learnings in mathematics lack challenge to a pupil, boredom and a dislike for learning may well set in.

5. Give assistance to the pupil in homework as it is needed. Parents, however, definitely should not do the homework for the learner. The pupil must do the learning. No one can do this for the involved learner. If the homework assignments are excessively lengthy, consult with the teacher in making necessary adjustments.

IN SUMMARY

The home setting has much to offer in guiding pupils to achieve at a more optimal level in mathematics. There are too many environmental forces operating to hold the school completely responsible for pupils achieving vital learnings in mathematics. The home and the school must be partners in developing the best curriculum possible for each pupil.

CHAPTER FIVE

OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

At this point, it perhaps serves no useful purpose in writing about each separate curriculum area in terms of assistance that parents may give to their children. What has been written about reading, writing, and mathematics, in many cases, applies to other curriculum areas also. Chapter five then will give additional pointers to parents in guiding their children to achieve well in the school-class setting.

Parental Help in Other Curriculum Areas

What might parents do to guide their children to do well in curriculum areas such as social studies, science, and health?

1. Discuss with pupils current events items from newscasts on television and radio. News items for discussion may also come from reputable daily newspapers and weekly newsmagazines. Also, when parents discuss these happenings among themselves, enthusiasm in this area should reflect within their children. Most social studies classes in school have time set aside for discussing current events items. Citizens in a democracy should be knowledgeable in terms of what is happening locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. There are, of course, items pertaining to science and health in the news.

2. Discuss positively with pupils in the home setting that which has been learned in social studies, science, and health units of study in the school curriculum.

3. Bring to the attention of involved pupils how science learnings can be applied in everyday living. For example, if a lid does not come off a jar with the sole use of the muscles, heat the lid with hot water. The lid being turned counter clockwise may then come off the involved jar.

4. Discuss with pupils new developments in the health arena. News items, in many situations, deal with cancer, arthritis, respiratory problems, heart disease, automobile accidents, safety problems, birth defects of infants, and abortion, among other problem areas. Recent developments in the news are mentioned frequently in each of these areas of health and safety. Parents should guide pupils to live healthfully and safely.

5. Discuss in a positive manner with learners, achievement in the school social studies, science, and health curriculum. Parents should offer assistance in these curriculum areas as it is needed by pupils. Talk to the teacher, if necessary, to adjust the child's curriculum if it is too easy or too complex.

6. Take pupils on tours of museums and other places of interest in the community, state, and nation. Discuss observations made with involved pupils.

7. Assist pupils to write up observations made of tours and trips that were taken to different areas either locally and/or those visits made to more remote areas. These writeups may be written in terms of diary entries.

8. Discuss with pupils personal and social problems which they experience. Parents should listen carefully and sympathetically to these problematic situations. The adult needs to guide learners in obtaining insight and possible solutions to these problems.

IN SUMMARY

Parents/guardians need to assume adequate responsibility in educating their young. Pupils need to receive proper nutrition, clothing, shelter, love, and attention. No one can do well in life if these necessities are lacking. The school is one institution to guide pupils to learn and achieve as much as possible.